



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

Humanities

FEDERAL/STATE PARTNERSHIP

The humanities belong to everyone.

The humanities preserve our valued traditions and transmit them from generation to generation. The humanities listen to the voices of many generations and share them through history, literature, philosophy, ethics, religion, languages, archaeology, and all the other areas of thought and culture that make up the record of human activity.

The humanities have practical applications for everyday life. They offer individuals and societies the opportunity to test ideas or actions and to imagine their consequences. The humanities provide a context for envisioning the impact—positive and negative—of new ideas in our culture, politics, and daily lives. They benefit people by helping them to think about and to consider life's surprises and challenges before they happen and by giving strength when they do happen. The humanities help us to make informed decisions.

The humanities help us answer big questions. What is the meaning, value, and purpose of human life? What is justice? What is equality? What is freedom? How might a just society function? How do individuals relate to the state and society? What are the moral consequences of human action? Why do both cruelty and good exist? How do people best work together?

The humanities

- Give us wisdom and vision
- Clarify our roles as citizens in a democratic society
- Explain politics, religion, business, ethics, international relations, social and community values
- Encourage our participation in our communities
- Assist us in weighing the ideas, statements, and discourse we hear and read
- Help us understand and explain to what or to whom we give authority
- Awaken us to the possibilities of human life and culture
- Let us think big and understand much
- Make us curious about people and places
- Open us to the experiences of others and allow us to understand what we haven't experienced ourselves
- Give us the means to recognize the common ground shared by all varieties of human thought and endeavor, and to bring about connections among them
- Help to make sense of the world we live in
- Tease our brains and expand our understanding
- Power our imaginations
- Preserve and share our stories
- Explore what it is to be human
- Assure us that we are not alone